PUDUKKOTTAI STATE
NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU

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LECTURE CXXIV.

BELLS OF VICTORY AND AFTER.

(*Mr. Churchill—London, Nov. 29.*)

" If you can dream—and not make dreams your
master ;
If you can think—and not make thoughts
your aim ;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same."

El. ALAMEIN.

Two Sundays ago, all bells rang to celebrate the victory of our Desert Army at El Alamein. Here was a martial episode in British history, which deserved special recognition. But the bells also carried, with their crashing joyous peals, our thanks-giving that, in spite of all our errors and shortcomings, we have been brought nearer to the frontiers of deliverance.

We have not reached them yet. But we are becoming ever more entitled to be sure that the awful perils which might well have blotted out our life, and all that we have and cherish, will be surmounted, and that we shall be preserved for further service in the vanguard of mankind. We have to look back along the path we have trodden these last three years of toil and strife, to value properly all we have escaped and all we have achieved.

No mood of boastfulness, of vain glory, of over-confidence, must cloud our minds ; but I think we have the right, which history will endorse, to feel that we have the honour to play a part in saving the freedom and future of the world.

That wonderful association of States and races, spread all over the globe, called the British Empire, or the British Commonwealth if you will—I do not quarrel about it—and, above all, our small island, stood in the gap all alone in

the deadly hour. Here we stood firm though all was drifting. Throughout the British Empire, not one community faltered, though all around was very dark.

Here, we kept the light burning, which now spreads broadly over the vast array of the United Nations. That is why it was right to ring out bells and lift our heads for a moment, in gratitude and in relief.

NORTH AFRICA.

At the other side of Africa, a thousand miles or more to the westward the tremendous joint, undertaking of the United States and Britain, which was fraught with so many hazards, has also been crowned with astonishing success. To transport these large armies of several hundred thousand men, with all their intricate and elaborate modern apparatus, secretly across the seas and oceans, and to strike to the hour, and almost to the minute, simultaneously at a dozen points, in spite of all the U-boats and all the chances of weather, was a feat of organisation which will long be studied with respect.

ITALY.

Our operations in French North Africa should enable us to bring the weight of the war home to the Italian Fascist State in a manner not hitherto dreamed of by its guilty leaders, or still less by the unfortunate Italian people Mussolini has led, exploited and disgraced.

Already, the centres of war industry in Northern Italy are being subjected to harder treatment than any of our cities experienced in the winter of 1940.

But if the enemy should, in due course, be blasted from the Tunisian tip—which is our aim—the whole of the south of Italy, all the naval bases, and all the munition establishments and other military objectives, wherever situated, will be brought under a prolonged, scientific and shattering air attack.

It is for the Italian people, 40 million of them, to say whether they want this terrible thing to happen to them or not. One man, and one man alone, has brought them to this pass. There was no need for them to go to war. No one was going to attack them. We tried our best to induce them to remain neutral, enjoying peace and prosperity, and exceptional prosperity in a world of storm.

But Mussolini could not resist the temptation of stabbing prostrate France and, what he thought was, helpless Britain in the back. Mad dreams of Imperial glory, the lust of conquest and of booty, and the arrogance of long, unbridled tyranny led him to his fatal shameful act.

In vain, I warned him. He would not hearken. On deaf ears and a stony heart fell the wise, far-seeing appeals of the American President. The hyena as is his nature, broke all bounds of decency and even common sense.

To-day his Empire is gone. We have over 100 Italian Generals and nearly 300,000 of his soldiers in our hands as prisoners of war.

Agony grips the fair land of Italy. This is only the beginning and what have the Italians to show for it? A brief promenade, by German permission, along the

Riviera, a flying visit to Corsica, a bloody struggle with the heroic patrols of Yugoslavia, a deed of undying shame in Greece, the ruins of Genoa, Turin, Milan—and this is only a foretaste.

RUSSIA.

As I speak, an immense battle, which has already yielded results of the first magnitude, is moving forward to its climax. And this, it must be remembered, is only one part of the Russian Front stretching from the White Sea to the Black Sea along which at many points, the Russian armies are attacking.

The jaws of another Russian winter are closing on Hitler's armies. One hundred and eighty German divisions, many of them reduced to little more than brigades by the slaughters and privations they have suffered—together with a host of miserable Italians, Rumanians and Hungarians dragged from their homes by a maniac's fantasy—all these as they reel back from the fire and steel of the avenging Soviet Armies must prepare themselves, with weakened forces and with added pangs, for a second dose of what they got last year.

FRANCE.

I must now conduct you back to the west—to France, where another vivid scene of this strange melancholy drama has been unfolded. It was foreseen, when we were planning a descent upon North Africa, that this would bring about immediate reactions in France. I never had the slightest doubt myself that Hitler would break the Armistice, overrun all France, and try to capture the French Fleet at Toulon.

Such developments were to be welcomed by the United Nations, because they entailed the extinction, for all practical purposes, of the sorry farce and fraud of the Vichy Government. This was a necessary prelude to that reunion of France, without which French resurrection was impossible.

That Fleet, brought by folly, and worse than folly, to its melancholy end, redeemed its honour by an action of self-immolation. And, from the flames and smoke of the explosions at Toulon. France will rise again.

BITTER YEARS AHEAD.

Do not let us be led away by any fair-seeming appearances of fortune. Let us rather put our trust in those deep slow-moving tides that have borne us thus far already, and will surely bear us forward—if we know how to use them—until we reach the harbour where we would be.

I know of nothing that has happened yet which justifies the hope that the war will not be long, or that bitter and bloody years do not lie ahead. Certainly, the most painful experiences would lie before us if we allowed ourselves to relax our exertions, to weaken the disciplined unity and order of our array, if we fell to quarrelling about what we should do with our victory before that victory had been won.

We must not build on hopes or fears, but only on the continued faithful discharge of our duty, wherein alone will be found safety and peace of mind.

Remember that Hitler, with his armies and his secret police, holds nearly all Europe in his grip. Remember that he has millions of slaves to toil for him, a vast mass of munitions, many mighty arsenals, and many fertile fields. Remember that Goering has brazenly declared that, whoever starves in Europe, it will not be the Germans. Remember that these guilty villains know that their lives are at stake. Remember how small a portion of the German army the British have yet been able to engage and to destroy. Remember that the U-boat warfare is not diminishing but growing, and that it may well be worse before it is better.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

28—11—42 to 4—12—42.

Russia.—Marshal Timoshenko's offensive at STALINGRAD is a pincer movement. The northern arm striking *behind* the German lines crossed the Don *eastward*, along a hundred miles, piercing the river at several points between SERAFIMOVICH and KALACH and captured KALACH in the Don Bend. The other or southern arm ferried across the Volga and starting from KELMAK, and striking at the STALINGRAD—KRASNADOR railway moved *westwards towards* the Don. The two arms now linking up at CHIRSK have trapped the Germans between the Volga and the Don. Hitler, to save face, is rushing up reinforcements unable to withdraw and unwilling to surrender. Held and pressed from north-east, hammered from the west and enclosed in the south, it looks that destruction faces the enemy. The focal point of the STALINGRAD battle is now in an isosceles triangle formed by STALINGRAD, KALACH and KACHALINSKY, on the east bank of the Don, 30 miles from KALACH and 30 from STALINGRAD.

Inside the factory area the Germans are hopelessly resisting and the Russians are recovering territory, point by point, ruin by ruin.

In the South-west sector, outside the trap, the Germans are counter-attacking but the Soviet retain the initiative. North-west of the city the Soviet air-force is harassing the fleeing enemy.

Another pincer movement is in progress in the Moscow sector, where the Russians cutting behind the German defensive hedge-hog at RJEV have crossed the railway junction at VELIKIYE LUKI. The Soviet offensive in this sector is resulting in heavy German casualties.

El Agheila.—At the CYRENAICA end of the North AFRICAN front the 8th Army is now half-way between JEDABAYA and EL AGHEILA, probing the outer defences in the latter place. The chase across the LIBYA plains is ended and difficult country lies ahead.

Tunisia.—An air-battle, reported to be equal in intensity to that of the Battle of BRITAIN is now raging in the TUNIS-BIZERTA region. On Nov. 27 Allies' forces reached within 10 miles of TUNIS. Since then, the British First Army has taken TEBURBA, 15 miles west of TUNIS, DEJEDEIRA, an important railway junction between TUNIS and BIZERTA and an army air-field in the environs of TUNIS. Allied troops have now reached the Tunisian coast between SFAX and GABES. A detachment of French troops has also reached PONT DU FAHS, a railway town about 35 miles south of TUNIS. Axis communications with TRIPOLITANIA have been cut off.

The Solomons.—Nov. 23. Dive-bombers and fighters from GUADALCANAR attacked enemy installations in MUNDA, at the western end of NEW GEORGIA Island, about 180 miles from the Henderson air-field. U. S. marine patrols also attacked NAMBULO in the Mount Aeten area. On Nov. 30 there was patrol activity in the GUADALCANAR area. TOKYO reports another naval fight in the SOLOMONS but if this be true it does not appear to have been a serious affair, seeing that Allied communiqués make no mention of it.

New Guinea.—On Nov. 23–24 the Japs were desperately resisting around Cape Endaire, east of BUNA. On Nov. 26–27 the KAHILI aerodrome near BUIN was attacked by flying fortresses. The Australians are getting ready for a final assault on GONA. With their backs to the sea the Japanese are fighting a desperate battle.

The Aleutians.—The Japanese have re-occupied ATTU.

China.—Japanese forces which, on Thursday last, shelled SACHENG, a coastal town in the Fukien border, were driven away after a 3-hour artillery duel. Chinese forces attacked the north-east skirts of CANTON, while in another raid on CANTON, on Friday last, a 10,000-ton Japanese ship was sunk and another was damaged. Japanese forces also sustained heavy losses on the CHEKIANG front.

Thailand.—U. S. bombers raided BANGKOK on November 26, America's thanks giving day.

The Indian Ocean—On November 30, South African forces occupied the French island of REUNION in the Indian Ocean.

Burma—On November 30, squadrons of the 10th Air Force attacked Japanese installations twice bombing the docks and ware-houses at RANGOON. In a day-light raid on PORT BLAIR in the Andamans by American bombers a direct hit was scored on a 250-foot naval auxiliary vessel. R. A. F. bombers carried out attacks on several targets on the Maya and Kaladon and Myittha rivers. On December 1, the R. A. F. carried out attacks on TOUNGOO and AKYAB.

ALLIED Air Raids.

23—11—42. (Monday).

EURORE.

NIGHT:—
Laying mines in enemy coastal waters.

NORTH AFRICA (3 axis planes lost).

Enemy positions at EL AGHEILA (Libya).
Docks and aerodrome at BIZERTA (Tunisia).
Air combats over LIBYA.

MEDITERRANEAN.

The aerodrome at PALERMO (Sicily).
An enemy vessel off SARDINIA.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the entire Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap positions in the BUNA—GONA area (N. Guinea).
BECO and RAIMEAN (Timor).
Railroad repair centre at MANDALAY (Burma).
MUNDA (N. Georgia).

24—11—42 (Tuesday).

EUROPE (1 Br. aircraft missing).

Trains and other railway targets in North FRANCE and BRITTANY.

NORTH AFRICA (14 axis planes destroyed).

EL AGHEILA (Libya).
Docks and shipping at BIZERTA.
Aerodromes at **GABES** and southern TUNISIA.
TRAPANI (Sicily).
TRIPOLI (Libya).
A merchant vessel off SICILY.

RUSSIA.

Aircraft on the ground and air combats along the entire RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap position in the BUNA-GONA area (N. Guinea).
The aerodrome at LAE (N. Guinea).
Enemy troops at KAVIENG and LAUTEM.
KOEPANG (Timor).

25—11—42 (Wednesday).

EUROPE.

DAY:—
Enemy shipping off the DUTCH coast (one ship sunk).
NIGHT:—
A supply ship off the NORWEGIAN coast.

NORTH AFRICA.

Air combats over TUNIS (12 axis planes shot down).
Docks at TUNIS.
Shipping in the harbour at HOMS and TRIPOLI.
A schooner off TUNISIA.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the entire Eastern battlefront.

FAR EAST.

Jap reinforcements in the BUNA-GONA area (N. Guinea).
KISKA (Aleutians).
LAE (NEW GUINEA).
Railway station at MYINGYAN (Burma).
Aerodromes at HEHO, MINGALADON and MEIKTILA (all in Burma).

26—11—42 (Thursday).

EUROPE (2 allied planes shot down; 2 enemy planes destroyed.)

DAY:—
Goods trains, tugs and barges in FRANCE and HOLLAND.
Two small supply ships off the DUTCH coast.

NORTH AFRICA.

The naval base at BIZERTA; the aerodrome at TUNIS.
Enemy positions at EL AGHEILA.
Axis supply ships in the SICILIAN channel.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

BUNA-GONA area (N. Guinea).
The aerodromes at MUNDA (N. Georgia).
CANTON (CHINA).
Oil refinery at BANGKOK (Thailand),
MAGWE (Burma).

27—11—42 (Friday).

EUROPE (3 Br. planes missing).

DAY:—
Axis transport and targets in Northern FRANCE and HOLLAND.

NORTH AFRICA.

Docks at BIZERTA (Tunisia).
Air combats over the SICILIAN CHANNEL (2 planes).
Transport aircraft at EL OUTIA (Tripoli).
Air fields at SICILY.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

BUNA-GONA area (N. Guinea).
The aerodrome at LAE (N. Guinea).
NOVALUSA and BECO (both in Timor).
A submarine in HUON Gulf.

28—11—42 (Saturday).

EUROPE.

DAY:—

Goods trains and other transports in Northern FRANCE and HOLLAND.

NIGHT:—

The great Italian arsenal at TURIN.

NORTH AFRICA.

An aerodrome north of TUNIS.
The naval base at BIZERTA.
GABES.
German position at EL AGHEILA.
TRIPOLI.

RUSSIA.

(For the week 21st Nov. to 28th; Axis planes lost 234; Russian planes lost 99.)

Air combats and grounded aircraft all over the Russian battle Zone.

FAR EAST.

BUNA-GONA area (NEW GUINEA).
Enemy installations at MUNDA (N. Georgia).
BECO and NOVALUSA (Timor).

29—11—42. (Sunday).

EUROPE (2 allied planes lost).

NIGHT:—

Ry. communications in BELGIUM.
Locomotives in Northern FRANCE.
Military targets in TURIN (Italy).

NORTH AFRICA (not a single allied plane lost).

The harbour at TRIPOLI (Libya).
Electric power station at TUNIS.
The harbour at BIZERTA.
Shipping off TRIPOLITANIA.

MEDITERRANEAN.

The aerodrome at COMISO (Sicily).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and aircraft on the aerodrome all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

BUNA-GONA area (N. Guinea).
The aerodrome at LAE.
MABOISE (Timor).
The airfield at KAUIENG.
The aerodrome at MAGWE (Burma).
Oil installations at NYAUGHLA (Burma).

ENEMY AIR RAIDS.

24—11—42 (Tuesday).

BRITAIN.

No air raid.

NORTH AFRICA.

ALGIERS (Algeria).

25—11—42 (Wednesday)

BRITAIN.

No air raid.

NORTH AFRICA.

Allied bases on the ALGERIAN coast.

FAR EAST.

Port DARWIN (Australia) (one Jap plane shot down).

26—11—42 (Thursday)

BRITAIN.

No air raid.

NORTH AFRICA.

ORAN.

FAR EAST.

No information available.

27—11—42 (Friday).

BRITAIN.

No air attack anywhere.

MEDITERRANEAN.

Reconnaissance over MALTA.

FAR EAST.

The airfield at GUADALCANAR (Solomons).

28—11—42 (Saturday).

BRITAIN.

No air raid.

NORTH AFRICA.

The docks at ALGIERS.

FAR EAST.

Port MORESBY (N. Guinea).

29—11—42 (Sunday).

BRITAIN.

No air raid anywhere in BRITAIN.

NORTH AFRICA.

Br. positions in TUNIS area.

FAR EAST.

The aerodrome area at Port DARWIN (Australia).

30—11—42 (Monday).

DAY:—

BRITAIN.

Coastal districts of South and South-west ENGLAND.

No air attack during Night.

NORTH AFRICA.

No information available.

FAR EAST.

An aerodrome at MILNE BAY.

SIDE LIGHTS.

A TRIBUTE. Our first duty this week is one of grateful appreciation for the great man, who, in an hour of mortal danger stood at the breach and saved the world to civilisation, we mean, Mr. Churchill who, on November 30, completed his 68th year. He has been called the man of the hour, but as we feel, the tribute is inadequate. By his indomitable will and great powers of leadership he has made the hour rather and won for himself a place in the niche of fame, among the world's liberators. His latest broadcast on the eve of his birthday, of which we print extracts elsewhere is ringing, bold, and thoughtful, a master-piece, as ever, of convincing and inspiring oratory. May his services continue long for BRITAIN'S, the Empire's, the world's cause.

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THE TOULON TRAGEDY. November 27 will ever be remembered as the blackest day of French history, because on that day, on the pretext of preventing collaboration with the Anglo-American alliance, Hitler ordered the seizure of TOULON where lay the French fleet. But, as it turned out, November 27 also proved the day of vindication, though ghastly, of French honour. Admiral de la Borde commanding the fleet ordered the ships to be scuttled rather than be seized while the French troops in the town blew up the batteries, and the arsenal on the coast. The loss was grievous, including 3 battleships, several cruisers, destroyers and submarines. Hitler's prize was only a scorched fleet and a blasted town.

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THE LAST OF VICHY. TOULON rings the curtain down on what has been called the tragi-comedy of Vichy. Vichy is no more and with it the Vichy colonial empire is gone. SYRIA, MADAGASCAR, North, West, and Equatorial AFRICA have all gone over to the Allies or are under their occupation. INDO-CHINA is under the Japanese strangle-hold, while the Vichy possessions in the Western hemisphere have passed under American vigilance. A part of FRANCE alone remained and Hitler has now laid violent hands on it, completing the felony at TOULON. Thus Pétain who signed the armistice in the hope of forming a Vichy empire has lost both the empire and the supporting fleet. As it has been said of him, he has 'the eyes of a child in the head of an old man'. Had he listened to Mr. Churchill in 1940 he would not have lived to see the present hour of humiliation but would be carrying on the war against FRANCE'S eternal enemy, from ENGLAND, at the head of a fleet and an army.

Now Pétain is not even the shadow of an administrator. Darlan doubts if the aged Marshal speaks with his own voice. Laval, to whom Pétain has practically abdicated, is Mr. Facing-both-ways or, as Mr. Wickham Steed has happily put it, is the person, 'whose name significantly spells the same both

ways and in whom the only clean thing is the white tie he wears'; and this Laval, the most hated man in FRANCE, will hereafter be not Pétain's shadow's shadow but Hitler's.

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QUISLINGS are the straws which show which way the wind blows. They are the political weather-cocks indicating the turn in the tide of war. Darlan's transfer of allegiance to the Allies is an instance in point, because, it may be remembered not long ago he vied with Laval for Hitlerian favours. The flight of General Tsolakighu, Quisling Governor of the puppet Government of GREECE, is another case. His treachery is notorious. On a former occasion, in the late war, he abandoned his division and reported his commander dead and buried. The commander's family also went into mourning. But three months later the commander returned, very much alive. Of such stuff are quislings made!

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OUR WARTIME BAROMETERS. It has been said that TURKEY and SPAIN are, in these war-worn times, the political barometers, respectively, of the MIDDLE EAST and Western EUROPE. From ANKARA comes a report that the Caudillo has refused GERMANY the use of Spanish naval and air-bases. The recent dissolution of the Falange Council need cause no anxiety; it has gone out, having served its normal time and Senor Suner, its most dangerous element has already been eliminated.

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THE U-BOAT. Hitler's last straw is, from recent reports, proving a broken reed. In the recent Anglo-American landings in AFRICA U-boats were not evaded or brushed aside but given battle in a 10 days open conflict. Allied destroyers, corvettes and aircraft took up their challenge and beat them off. For every transport or supply ship lost a U-boat was either sunk or damaged. For every ton of shipping lost two tons were gained in Western or Northern AFRICA.

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DUPED. It would appear that Hitler has been duped not only by Mr. Churchill but by Stalin also. He was fooled by Mr. Churchill when he declared that a second front would be opened in 1942; and called DIEPPE a reconnoitring attempt, while he was all the time preparing to open a new front in North AFRICA. Similarly, as we can now see, Stalin has successfully duped him by publicly making recurring complaints of lack of supplies from his allies, while as a matter of fact, all through the summer he had been piling up men and materials for the present Winter offensive which has now overtaken Hitler in RUSSIA. The Russian thrust has also been timed so as to synchronise with the Anglo-American thrust on both sides of AFRICA—a fact which goes to show that the double duping was planned in collaboration.

The history of 1941 is now repeating itself with a difference. On Nov. 22, last year, the German thrust reached its climax in RUSSIA, threatening LENINGRAD, MOSCOW, the UKRAINE, and the CRIMEA. At nearly the same time, this year the Germans, encircling STALINGRAD, threatened the CAUCASUS. Now, as then, winter intervening, the Russian counter-attack has begun. Now as then, Montgomery has driven the Axis back across the Libyan desert to EL AGHEILA, while last year Auchinleck drove the enemy back over the same area as far as BENGHAZI.

But as we said, there is a difference. Last year (Dec. 7) the Japanese opened a new front to divert the Allies; but this year it is the Allies that have opened a new front to hem the Axis. Last year, with only one front to defend, Hitler withdrew his soldiers home to prepare for the following spring. The present winter, on the other hand will see a dissipation, rather than a recuperation of his strength. To the vast coastline of the Atlantic and the Arctic which Hitler had to guard last year has now been added the whole coastline of the Mediterranean. The Russian Winter offensive which has started now earlier than last year will not permit any of his forces to be withdrawn from the eastern theatre, while the spectacle of fallen France will exasperate subjugated EUROPE to further acts of sabotage and rebellion.

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THE BATTLE FOR TUNISIA is going as well as it could be. People who complain that it does not go faster may ponder over Mr. Anthony Eden's remark that the battle has now entered on a 'critical phase'. The Allied communication lines are long while those of the Axis from SICILY to CAPE BON are only about 90 miles, over which an enemy transport aircraft can ply several times a day and a swift surface vessel can carry supplies unscathed. Let us remember that in spite of the Allied handicap the advance of the British Army is making steady progress. The domination of the Western Méditerranean by the Allied fleet is another favourable factor.

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THE TRIPLE OBJECT. The Allied offensives in the eastern and the western sectors of North AFRICA are but parts of a single strategy which is to destroy the Axis power in North AFRICA, to regain control of the Mediterranean, and to use Northern AFRICA as a spring-board for an attack on EUROPE. The means to be employed is mostly military at the Libyan end but partly political and partly military at the Moroccan end. The plan extends even earlier to 1940 and the three British desert offensives of 1940, 1941 and 1942 show that the destruction of the Axis military strength has been the dominant and continuous objective of the Allied fighting in the desert. In 1940, Wavell took 1,33,000 prisoners before he reached BENGHAZI; in 1941, Auchinleck, 32,000 prisoners before reaching it; and now Montgomery has inflicted 75,000 casualties before arriving at this destination.

Another point also deserves notice. There has been an increasing tempo in the *rate* of Allied advance in each year—1940—Wavell—500 miles in 2 months; 1941—Auchinleck—400 miles in just over a month; and now, Alexander, 800 miles in a fortnight. It is the result of the perfection of mechanised power and the fruit of co-operation of the land, sea, and air forces.

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AXIS REACTION. The sudden burst of Allied activities over the Mediterranean area has, judged by the confusion of their radio out-put, evidently thrown the Axis out of balance. For one thing Italian and German propaganda have taken different turns. The Italians who have taken the affair seriously now substitute the name of Rommel for that of their commanders in their communiqués, as if the Germans and not they were responsible for what was happening. The Italian broadcasters are asking their people to stand firm, and imitate Churchill and the British, after DUNKIRK. The German Government seeks to hide its shame by ignoring it, by minimising the importance of the desert campaign and by exaggerating Allied shipping losses. They also seem to act on the principle that in the present circumstance a certain amount of popular discontent is inevitable for which there is no remedy except toleration.

Goebbels has made this clear in his weekly article in *Das Reich*, in which he makes a distinction between 'mood' (Stimmung) and 'bearing' (haltung). Moods of discontent, he explains, are temporary: they will pass; they do not matter; and the German people may even indulge themselves in them for a while. But he warns the Germans that they would get into trouble if their despondent mood changed into discontented bearing.

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NEW GUINEA. The Allies began their attack upon the Japanese in NEW GUINEA on September 29th. The latest news is that the Japanese-held supply base of GONA has been occupied by Allied troops, and that Allies are only one mile away from the far more important base of BUNA. The time has come when the campaign in NEW GUINEA may be viewed not from the angle of removal of threat to PORT MORSEBY—and therefore to AUSTRALIA—but as one which is destined to oust the Japanese from NEW GUINEA, and later from the whole of the South West Pacific. The prospective gain of BUNA will weaken the Japanese hold on the ports of SALAMUA and LAE, roughly 150 miles further, because the Allies will have come very much closer to JAPAN's principal supply base—RABAUL, in NEW BRITAIN—and develop a grave threat to the enemy's flank in the SOLOMONS.

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BENGAL. H. M. I. S. BENGAL, a minesweeper of the Royal Indian Navy, won her battle honours on Nov. 11, by sinking a heavily armed Japanese commerce raider in the Indian Ocean. Under the command of Lt. Commander W. G. Wilson,

R. I. N. V. R., while escorting the motor vessel *Ondina* (6,314 tons) she sighted two enemy vessels the *Kikokumaru* (10,000 tons) and the *Kunikamamaru* (6,863 tons) and both she and *Ondina* steamed in to attack. The BENGAL took on the larger vessel and sank her by deadly accurate fire. The magnitude of the performance will be realised when it is remembered that apart from enjoying superiority of tonnage, the raiders had far heavier armament. While both enemy ships were armed with 5.5-inch guns and equipped with torpedo tubes and two catapult aircraft, our vessels had to rely on a single 4-inch gun each. Although the action was reported as being joined in the Indian Ocean, the encounter actually took place about a thousand miles south-west of JAVA, bordering on Australian waters.

MARSHAL PETAIN.

(*The Illustrated London Weekly*).

FEAR.

The Duke of Wellington once remarked that the only thing he was afraid of was fear. Just as some physicians of the body have claimed in the past—and claim to-day—that there is only one physical disease, and that all other diseases are mere secondary manifestations of it, so certain philosophers have attributed all moral error and perversity to the parent root of fear. There is certainly no more insidious foe in man's heart. It is all the time whispering there, bidding him commit this pettiness or that baseness to avcid this or that unpleasant consequence; whether the calamity threatened be a bullet or total ruin or merely the frown of a cook or a bank manager. Lies—though in this respect Iago and Dr. Goebbels may possibly claim to be dishonourable exceptions—nearly always arise from some species of fear, even the boastful genus, since these will usually be found to be an attempt to fill up some secret cavern of an inferiority complex. It is no accident that the old English conception of a good man was a straight-forward being who was never afraid and always spoke the truth. The latter was always instinctively regarded as an outward and visible sign of the former. A man habitually spoke the truth because he habitually faced up to the threats—great or small—of his circumstance. He refused to flinch, knowing in his inner consciousness, like the Duke of Wellington, that if he flinched once he would flinch again. There is nothing that becomes a habit so quickly as running away. There is no habit harder to break.

A FATAL STEP.

Take Vichy, for instance, I have never been hasty to blame the surrender of Marshal Pétain, for I realised the full extent of his dilemma. An honourable and devout man and a sincere patriot he was called to the head of the State to save it from the consequences of follies he had condemned and errors he had long deplored. In that hour of bitter reckoning, his countrymen looked to him to save them from overwhelming calamity. There was only one

fearless thing to do. And there was only one right thing to do. It was to accept to the full, for himself and his countrymen, the physical implications of the disaster they had collectively deserved. It was to recognise that from these there could be no escape save by the strait and narrow road of suffering, endurance and redemption. Strangely enough, the old soldier did recognise this—vocally. He told the French people who looked to him for leadership that there was no other course for them. But in practice he sought another course. He tried to save their goods and chattels and the outward form of their shattered life by dependence on the magnanimity of Hitler and the cunning of Laval. If ever a man out of fear turned his feet towards a fatal and treacherous quick sand, it was Marshal Pétain in that hour.

DIEPPE.

From that hour till now, the consequences of that fear have led him, and the men who surround and deceive him, into an ever deepening mire of humiliation. Let us admit that they—or, at least, he—have done their best to avoid the worst betrayal of all: the use of France's fleet against her former ally. That, at least their sole remaining bargaining counter with the oppressor —they have so far denied to Hitler. (This was written in September— Editor). But there is little else they have left undone or unsaid to prove themselves the conqueror's lackey and to prolong the bondage and agony of France. A last example was afforded by the Paris news service the other day; a report—one can only hope that it merely emanated from Dr. Goebbel's tortuous mind—that the Marshal had telegraphed to the German General commanding the Dieppe area, congratulating him on freeing the soil of France so quickly from British and Canadian invaders. Could human perversity of conscience go much further than this? Freeing the soil of France! What sort of freedom resides in French soil occupied by German conquerors? And what conceivable justification is there for a sovereignty which denies the hospitality of one's and to an ally, while courteously permitting its use to an enemy for the purpose of invading, starving and bombarding that ally? Was it not from the "free" soil of occupied France that Hitler attempted to launch his invasion of England in 1940, and was planning to launch another when—if ever—he finished with the Russians? Was it not from that same soil that the bombers flew to blast our cities and slay and maim our women and children? And have we no right in equality to "invade" a territory—one can scarcely for the moment call it by the proud sovereign title of France—which is being used for such murderous purposes? As well style invaders the three quarters of a million British dead of 1914—18 who lie beneath the soil of the glorious France they defended, as stigmatise the brave men—many of them Frenchmen and the descendants of Frenchmen—who fought so gallantly, not, we believe for the last time, on the still enslaved beaches of Dieppe.

A COWARDLY DECISION.

I am not suggesting that Marshal Pétain, in 1940, should have abandoned his people and fled in person to Africa. He was too old to direct armies;

his value to his countrymen was as a symbol and a figure head. Had he flown to Africa, leaving helpless countrymen to bear the full burden of German bondage, they and his own conscience might possibly have accused him. Further military resistance in France itself at that moment was useless: It could not stay the *pitiless iron tide* for more than a few hours. Pétain was no doubt right in recognising that after the German break through in champagne and the demoralisation of the French Army. Under the circumstances, it might have been better for him, like Leopold of the Belgians, to have delegated his authority to others to carry on the war from England and Africa, while remaining behind himself to share the sorrows, privations and servitude of his helpless peoples. The irony of the situation is that those privations and sorrows would not have been any the less had Pétain, so electing, not broken faith with his country's cause and his allies. And the servitude would have been infinitely less, because he and his countrymen would have faced up to the worst—as they had to in any case—without surrendering their own souls. They would have known the full physical horror and oppression of German robbery and dictation as they have known it and still know it. But they would have done so without the shame of feeling that they had themselves approved the oppressor's oppression. Like Leopold of the Belgians, Pétain unbowed in his refusal to acknowledge evil, would have grown daily in the love and respect of his country men and of all the free world. Had he perished, a victim to the physical compulsion of the conquerors, he would, at worst, have only anticipated his own certain demise by a few years or months. And he would have gone down to posterity as the man who, by his clear-sighted and fearless decision in an hour of universal fear, had achieved the redemption and resurrection of his country.

A LOST OPPORTUNITY.

That redemption and resurrection, for which France now looks to other men, would by now in all probability have been achieved, or be on the point of achievement. For consider what the situation might be to-day had France, accepting an inevitable armistice on her own soil, not surrendered, but continued the struggle, like Belgium, Holland and Norway, from her overseas possessions. The war in North Africa would long ago have come to an end; crushed between Wavell's army in Egypt and the French army in Algiers and Tunis, Mussolini's North African empire would have disappeared long before Rommel could have come to its aid. Faced by an unbroken Allied coastline from the Turkish frontier to Morocco, the Italian Navy would have been powerless. Our African army would have been free for operations elsewhere, and a stream of men and supplies could have been safely carried throuh the Mediterranean, under the protection of the Anglo-French Fleet, and a continuous umbrella of land-based fighter aircraft. Singapore would perhaps never have fallen: Malaya and the Dutch East Indies would still have been ours, with all their wealth of raw materials, and the Japanese would have been faced by overwhelming strength at sea. A British Expeditionary Force might have been fighting side by side with the Russians in the Caucasus; an

invasion of a crumbling Italy would be a comparatively easy operation. And the soil of France would not be threatened by British "invasion," for the war, in such circumstances, would almost certainly be won, and France liberated by other and easier means.

WHY PEOPLE RUN AWAY.

Lack of Familiarity With Danger.

(*The Hon. Mr. Justice S. Wadsworth—A. I. R.*)

Have you ever noticed what happens when an old woman is crossing the street and suddenly hears the horn of an approaching motor? She gives a start and then begins to run forward and, more often than not, she changes her mind and dodges back again, with the result that the driver of the car has to jam on all his brakes to prevent an accident. Of course if the woman stopped to think, she would realize that she only has to stand perfectly motionless, or better still, walk steadily forward, for the driver to avoid her with ease. But all of us have a natural tendency to run when scared. **We call it the instinct of self-preservation, but too often it results in self-destruction.**

Nowhere was this seen more clearly than in Belgium and Northern France in May 1940. Perhaps you have read some of those terrible books which described the flight of the refugees from those parts. They make grim reading, the more so because they are true. It was the same everywhere—long before the Germans were anywhere near a town, rumours started that the enemy was at hand. The whole population was seized with panic and this treacherous instinct of self-preservation led it to its doom. In their thousands they poured out on to the congested roads—cluttering them up with hand-carts and wheel-barrows and perambulators, laden with luggage. The roads were so jammed with panicky crowds and uncontrolled traffic that the troops moving up to the front could not advance, thus enabling the Germans to push forward with little resistance. If the hordes of refugees showed any signs of stopping, enemy planes swooped down with bombs and machine guns, butchering the helpless people and stirring up fresh panic. Families became separated in the confusion, and old folks and little children were left to die by the road side.

The irresistible westward flow of this great torrent of suffering humanity did more than anything else to hamper and demoralize the defending forces. But when the advancing forces of the enemy eventually caught up with the jam of refugees, they quickly cut a path through it with machine gun bullets—a method which the Allies could not contemplate. What the loss of civilian life was in those tragic weeks, none will ever know, but it must have been

enormous. What is quite certain is that, if these millions had stayed quietly in the shelter of their homes, the vast majority of them would have been perfectly safe and the defending armies would have had a far better chance of arresting the German advance.

RUNNING AWAY—ARRANT FOLLY.

Running away from an invasion is dangerous enough; but running away from an air raid is arrant folly. We now know that the very heavy casualties caused by the first Japanese raid on Rangoon were almost entirely due to the madness or ignorance of the people who streamed into the streets and tried to run away while the enemy planes were still overhead. The result was a death-roll which would have been almost entirely avoided if the people had had the sense to stay within the shelter of their houses. Did you see the figures of the casualties from air raids in England during the first three years of the war? When you think of the thousands and thousands of bombs which have been rained down indiscriminately upon the London area during this period, the figures of deaths due to enemy action were amazingly low. It is difficult to say what would be the percentage to total population, because there has been a good deal of evacuation of children and non-workers from the most vulnerable areas; **but certainly the death-rate for the whole period cannot be more than a small fraction of one per cent.** Compare this with what happens when cholera strikes an Indian village and often decimates the population in a few weeks. Yet people take cholera almost for granted but are prepared to run away in tens of thousands if half a dozen bombs are dropped in the neighbourhood. It is not that the people of this country have less courage than the citizens of London.

COURAGE OF AN INDIAN VILLAGER.

The courage of the Indian villager in a cholera epidemic is sometimes remarkable. I shall always remember an incident which happened in Malabar, where a prisoner was being taken by road in the custody of a constable to stand his trial before the magistrate. They had about fifteen miles to walk and when they had got about half way, the constable was suddenly taken ill with cholera. A fine chance for the prisoner to escape, you will say. Not a bit of it. What that poor criminal did was to put the constable on his back, vomiting and purging as he was, and carry him several miles to the nearest town, where a doctor saved the man's life. I have heard few braver or nobler acts than that and I am glad to say that it was rewarded. **No, it is not lack of courage that makes people run away from bombs. It is lack of familiarity with the danger. I hope that the occasion will not arise, but I have little doubt that if air-raids on Madras become frequent, the people of this city would get used to them and would carry on their daily tasks with an imperturbability not much inferior to that which has earned for the citizens of London the admiration of the world.**

We all have the feeling that the United Nations are getting the upper hand in the air, both in the east and in the west. We do not know what the future may bring forth, but we have reason to think that a serious attack on our coast is far less likely now than it was a few months ago and that, if it did come, we are much more prepared to meet. But this is a war in which the unexpected has been almost the rule. It would be very foolish of us to bank on the belief that the danger to our coast-line is past and to be unprepared for what may happen if we are wrong. Suppose the unexpected happens and there is a recrudescence of attacks on the Madras coast. **What is the duty of us ordinary citizens who are not engaged in A. R. P. or other defence duties? I venture to think that it can be summarized in two words—stay put.**

AFTER THE FIRST AIR RAID.

Don't start rushing about looking for a safer place. Get into the nearest building or trench, and stay there. If our fighters go out to engage the enemy, don't run into the middle of the street to see the fun—the chances are that, if you do, something unpleasant may drop on you. Above all when the first raid is over, don't dash to the railway station with all your family and belongings and clamour wildly for a ticket to the other end of India. To do this is to let your instintc for self-preservation get the better of your common sense, just like the old woman who dances about in front of an oncoming motor car. If enemy planes are about, railways and roads are places to avoid and probably your own house is as safe as anywhere else, especially if it has a shelter trench handy. **Moreover we have all got a duty in this matter. Not only ought we to resolve to do nothing to spread panic, we ought also to make up our minds to do nothing which will in any way impede the defence of our country. Nothing helps the enemy more than the disorganization of our communications. A mad stampede for railways and roads impedes the movement of the defence forces and may be fatal to their success.**

We who live in South India have, in the past, been so far removed from the dangers of war that we have grown up unfamiliar with warlike men and warlike things. Many of us have been brought up to regard sepoys and soldiers as dangerous animals like tigers and lions, to be avoided by peaceable folk. Now most of us have grown more familiar with the sight of the Indian sepoy and the British soldier and we are beginning to recognize him for what

he is—an ordinary decent fellow made of the same stuff as ourselves and sent here for our defence. Those of you who have mixed much with the soldiery will know that most of them have wives and children at home whom they are missing dreadfully, they are suffering constantly from home sickness and respond gladly to any little bit of friendliness they may receive from the strangers they have come to defend. We can do much to make the lot of our defenders easier. We may not all be able to entertain them in our homes, but we can at least show them courtesy and friendliness whenever we meet them. Let not our political views blind us to the fact that these men, whether they be Indian or British, are strangers in a strange land, sent here for our protection. **Surely they should be treated as honoured guests. They are no concerned with policies or parties. They have left their homes to fight the forces of evil and are prepared to undergo dangers and hardships in the common cause, which is our cause just as much as theirs. Let us therefore greet them as friends, whatever their community.**

THREE SOLDIERS AND A DOCTOR.

I was much cheered by an incident which happened in Madras a few weeks ago. Three soldiers were wandering late one night along the Poonamallee High Road, having missed the last train back to their camp and not knowing where to go or what to do. An Indian doctor returning from a professional visit, saw them, thought they had lost their way and asked them if he could help. They told him of their plight and he took them into his house, gave them a bed for the night and a cup of coffee in the morning and set them on their way with a feeling of friendliness towards India and Indians which no amount of lecturing could have given them. I venture to think that this hospitable doctor did more for the cause of Indian freedom than those who preach the pernicious doctrine of national hatred.

True nationalism is love of one's own country, not hatred of other people. It is the duty of all lovers of India to be jealous of India's good name and to do nothing which will hamper her defence. If the time of trial comes and we are once again threatened by hostile action, let the defence of our country, not the safety of our own skins, be our first concern. **Let us avoid panic which reduces men to the level of the beasts and generally results in the direst peril. If bombs**

come, let us remember that it is our duty to our country to remain calm, to set a good example to others and to avoid any action which will hamper the movements of those who are defending us. I earnestly hope that the occasion will not arise, but if it does and if you hear the bombs falling and the machine guns rattling, keep calm, take shelter and stay put.

THE NATIONAL WAR FRONT.

NOTES FOR VILLAGE OFFICERS AND SCHOOLMASTERS.

What is the National War Front ?

It is a body of citizens of all classes and creeds who are working in every part of India to help our soldiers in every possible way and so to achieve victory for India and her Allies.

Conditions of Membership.

Any man or woman may be a member who accepts the National War Front pledge, which reads :

> **" Because I am proud to be a citizen of India I solemnly pledge myself to stamp out defeatism and suppress alarmist rumours, to face and defy every peril threatening India's national honour and security, and to work day by day in the sure and certain hope of victory. "**

No contribution or subscription is required from members.

Special Responsibility of Village Officers.

In every village, the headman, the accountant and the schoolmaster are the natural leaders of the village. In peace and war, they are the nerves of the great body of the Indian Nation. On them falls the duty of waking what needs to be aroused and of lulling that which should sleep. Now, as never before, it is vitally important that this duty should be performed with whole-hearted enthusiasm and devotion.

Duties of Village Officers.

In some matters it depends upon the size and position of a village what can be done by the village officers. But in general it is the duty to learn true facts and true news about the war from the books and papers issued by

the National War Front through their local War Front Organisers, to spread the truth and to suppress rumours and defeatism. Here are some duties and activities which nearly all village officers can perform :

1. Realise and make others understand that we are fighting an enemy who attacks with words, lies and false promises, those whom his bullets cannot reach.
2. Make others understand that the man who pays attention to the words of the enemy is wounded just as much as the solider struck by his bullets.
3. See that the village is well fed and well defended and advise cultivators to grow the crops which the Government advises to be necessary.
4. Check all bad characters in your own village and drive away bad characters from outside.
5. Treat our own soldiers, if they come to the village, as friends and protectors and give them what help is possible.
6. If enemy soldiers come, avoid them; hide all supplies.
7. If there are soldiers whose homes are in the village, welcome them and feast them while they are home on leave and while they are absent, see that their families have no want.
8. See that letters are sent to soldiers with village news while they are away and see also that letters from soldiers are read and understood by their families if they cannot read for themselves.
9. Enrol members of the National War Front.
10. Organise meetings, lectures, talks, theatrical performances and so forth to explain what the War Front means.
11. Distribute War Front literature and see that posters and photographs are properly displayed and explained.
12. Check rumours and report those who spread them if they persist after being warned.

There are many more things which village officers can do to keep their village calm, clean and resolute, but the above instructions apply to every village in India—great and small. For further ideas and other work, village officers,

should consult local War Front Organisers and follow their advice implicitly, in the certain knowledge that this is the best service they can offer to their country, to their village and to themselves.

How to perform their duties.

The village officers have a great advantage over all other leaders. All their people are intimate friends with whom they have close and daily contact. They should make full use of this advantage and do their work personally and by word of mouth. They must equip themselves for this work by reading carefully all National War Front literature that they can secure from local Organisers and keep themselves well informed in war news and facts.

Village officers should think which of the tasks shown in the last paragraph must be performed in their village and should do the work themselves, with the help of reliable friends if necessary. With this preparation they can make their village a little fortress of security and sound views and know that they are serving India well.

They should take particular care to prevent or report unfair prices while for the defence of the village against bad characters, young men of strength and courage can be enrolled in village defence parties, and guns of local licensees made available for their use. Members of such parties can patrol the village at night and also help village officers with other suggested duties.

What your local Organiser can supply.

Village officers should ask their local War Front Organisers for supplies of material for their important work, such as :

1. Coloured posters, photographs, diagrams, etc.
2. Printed booklets, pamphlets and leaflets.
3. War Front plays.
4. Illustrated books like " War in Pictures ".

What to Remember every day.

All village officers and their friends who help the National War Front are not only helping to win victory for India but are also fighting in the front line by the side of India's gallant soldiers. India therefore expects all village officers to perform their important War Front duties each and every day.

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THE SECRETARY,

National War Front Bureau,

PUDUKKOTTAI. (South India.)

PROGRAMME.

LECTURE CXXIV.

5-12-42	Municipal Office.	7.45 p.m.
6-12-42	Tiruvarangulam.	7.00 „
„	Vamban ...	7.30 „
7-12-42	Tirumayyam ...	7.00 „
„	Melur ...	7.30 „
8-12-42	Kulavoippatti ...	7.00 „
„	Kilaiyur South ...	7.30 „
9-12-42	C. S. M. High School.	10.00 a.m.
9-12-42	Rani's High School.	10.15 a.m.
„	Pallivasal ...	7.00 p.m.
„	Pillamangalam.	7.30 „
10-12-42	P. Puduppatti ...	7.00 „
„	Vendampatti ...	7.30 „
11-12-42	Puliyur ...	7.00 „
„	Kannangudi ...	7.30 „

LECTURE CXXV. (*Batch 1.*)

12-12-42	Municipal Office.	7.45 p.m.
13-12-42	Puvarasagudi ...	7.00 „
„	Venkatakulam ...	7.30 „
14-12-42	Perungalur ...	7.00 „
„	Adanakkottai ...	7.30 „
15-12-42	Kiranur ...	7.00 p.m.
„	Nanjur ...	7.30 „
16-12-42	Arimalam ...	7.00 „
„	Kilanilaikkottai.	7.30 „
17-12-42	Udayalippatti ...	7.00 „
„	Killukottai ...	7.30 „

RECRUITING—ADVERTISEMENT—4 p. m.

5—12—42	Tirumayyam.
6—12—42	Maruthankoneviduthi.
7—12—42	Kiranur.
8—12—42	Vadakadu.
9—12—42	Rayavaram.
10—12—42	Kulipirai.
11—12—42	Pudukkottai.
12—12—42	Vettamviduthi.
13—12—42	Embal.
14—12—42	Viralimalai.
15—12—42	Perambur.
16—12—42	Karambakkudi.
17—12—42	Kilanilaikkottai.

Sri Brihadamba State Press, Pudukkottai. 750—6-12-42.